

NatWest: the truest indication of the Tory's ability ...

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As [The Guardian](#) has noted this morning:

NatWest Group has agreed to buy back shares worth £1.2bn from the UK government, in a transaction that will mean the bank is majority private-owned for the first time since it was bailed out during the financial crisis.

The bank, formerly known as Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), said it had agreed to make an off-market purchase of 550m shares, or 4.91% of its share capital, from HM Treasury at Friday's closing price of 220.5p.

I cannot help but reflect on the wasted opportunity implicit in this report.

The Royal Bank of Scotland (as NatWest was) could have been the UK's regional green bank of reconstruction. The gains would have been enormous.

It could have been the Covid bank, tasked with minimising fraud rather than maximising banker gain.

It could have been a green savings bank.

It could have helped deliver an integrated economic strategy.

Instead the only plan was to give it back to bankers to play with as they will, whatever the cost to society, so that the Tories could pretend everything was 'back to normal'.

The Tories really are the masters of wasted opportunities, all in pursuit of private gain for a few.